(c) if not, the reasons for delay in phasing out subsidies on these products; and

(d) by when Government propose to phase out subsidies on the above items?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN): (a) to (d) It has been decided to phase out subsidy on PDS Kerosene and Domestic LPG in three to five years effective 01.04.2002.

Acquisition of Gas fields in Saudi Arabia

2946. DR. C. NARAYANA REDDY: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Indian Oil Corporation and Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Videsh propose to acquire a gas field in Saudi Arabia;

(b) if so, the mode of transportation contemplated; and

(c) by when the project will commence?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN): (a) to (c) As of date there is no proposal to acquire gas field in Saudi Arabia by Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Limited (ONGC) or Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOC). However, recently he Saudi Arabian Ministry of Petroleum and Mineral Resources has indicated to offer, in the first round, 3 gas exploration blocks for foreign participation, through open bidding. The data on the blocks would be shown by the Saudi authorities to companies which qualify as per the Saudi assessment.

Supply of Kerosene to Madhya Pradesh

†2947. SHRI BALKAVI BAIRAGI:
SHRI SURESH PACHOURI:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether after the formation of Chhattisgarh allocation of kerosene oil to Madhya Pradesh has continuously declined;

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.